United Nations ST/AI/2001/2

Secretariat

15 March 2001

Administrative instruction

Appointments of limited duration

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/1, promulgates the following:

Section 1
Scope of application

1. This instruction applies to appointments for activities of limited duration (LD), under staff rule 301.1 (a) (ii), which are intended for peacekeeping and peacemaking, and humanitarian, technical cooperation and emergency operations. Such appointments may be granted to staff members appointed to serve at special missions or field locations where the Office of Human Resources Management has specifically authorized the use of LD appointments.

Section 2
Appointment and remuneration

Appointment

2.1 Appointments or assignments will normally be for an initial period of up to six months (including the three-month interim appointment pending medical clearance referred to in section 3.2 below).

2.2 Subsequently, LD appointments may be extended for a continuous period not exceeding three years, subject to renewal, exceptionally, for a final period of one year, which may not be extended. After completion of four years, the minimum break in service before an individual becomes eligible for a new LD appointment is six months.

2.3 After 12 months of continuous service in peacekeeping or other field missions, a staff member on an LD appointment at the P-3 or P-4 level may be considered for internal vacancies within the Secretariat at the P-4 level and above, in accordance with applicable rules.[1]

[1] Section 5.5 of ST/AI/1997/7, as amended by ST/AI/1998/5.

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Remuneration

2.4 The remuneration applicable to LD appointments is payable on a monthly basis, in an amount established at the time of initial appointment. Placement of the staff member on the salary scale and on the allowance grid will be determined by taking into account the qualifications and experience of the candidate and the requirements of the post. Formal post classification is not a requirement for LD appointments.

2.5 Adjustments to the level of remuneration upon new appointment or extension are discretionary and based on an assessment of all relevant factors.

2.6 The remuneration consists of a net base salary (gross salary less staff assessment), which is pensionable, and a non-pensionable service allowance, which also includes a family element for all LD staff with one or more dependants, determined in accordance with section 2.7 below. For staff in the Professional and Field Service categories, the salary scales, the service allowance schedules, and the pensionable remuneration schedules are set out in appendix C to the 300 series rules. For locally recruited General Service staff, the applicable salary scale and service allowance schedule are established separately for specific locations. These payments shall be made monthly and represent the total remuneration payable by the United Nations, to which may be added subsistence allowance, where applicable.

2.7 Payment of the family element of the service allowance shall be subject to the staff member's establishing that he or she has either a dependent spouse or at least one dependent child, as defined by staff rule 103.24. The family element shall not be payable on account of a secondary dependant — i.e., father, mother, brother or sister.

Section 3
Medical clearance

3.1 Medical clearance is required for all candidates for appointment, in accordance with the provisions of the administrative instruction on medical standards and clearances.[2]

3.2 In order to expedite recruitment procedures, candidates may be given an interim appointment for three months on the basis of a medical certificate stating that the candidate is in good health, free of tuberculosis, and fit to travel. Within three months of such appointment, the staff member must undergo a full medical examination, as required by the administrative instruction on medical standards and clearances.[2]

3.3 In case of redeployment between missions or return to the mission area after medical evacuation, a full medical examination may be required, at the discretion of the Medical Service.

[2] ST/AI/2000/7.

Section 4
Travel and related entitlements

4.1 Internationally recruited staff will be granted the following travel and shipment entitlements:

(a) Initial travel to the duty station or mission area upon appointment, and repatriation travel to the place of recruitment or country of nationality upon separation from service. The conditions determining authorization, standard and mode of travel shall be governed by the provisions of the administrative instruction on official travel.[3]

(b) Unaccompanied shipment of personal effects of up to 100 kilos upon appointment and upon completion of service, in accordance with staff rule 307.6 (c). When surface shipment is the most economical means of transport, the entitlement may exceptionally be converted to air freight on the basis of the full weight and volume, when the conditions set out in section 9.2 (b) of the administrative instruction on excess baggage, shipments and insurance are met.[4]

4.2 For each completed 12 months of service in special missions or duty stations classified by the International Civil Service Commission in hardship categories C, D or E and subject to an expectation of at least six additional months of service, LD staff will receive a lump-sum travel allowance equivalent to 75 per cent of the cost of the full economy-class fare by the least costly scheduled air carrier between the mission duty station and the place of recruitment or country of nationality. For staff serving at other missions or duty stations, a similar lump-sum payment will be made once only, following 24 months of service, subject to an expectancy of at least six additional months of service. The staff member is not expected to provide receipts or demonstrate actual expenditure of the amounts provided.

Section 5
Leave

5.1 Annual leave with full pay shall accrue at the rate of two and one half days for each complete calendar month of continuous service. When service commences after the first working day of a month, two days shall be credited when service begins on or before the sixteenth day; one day shall be credited when service begins later. When service ends before the last working day of the month, one day shall be credited for service ending on or before the fifteenth day; two days shall be credited when service ends later.

5.2 Annual leave may be taken only when authorized, and all arrangements as to leave shall be subject to the exigencies of service. Absence from work without authorization will result in non-payment of salary for the period of the absence, unless it was caused by circumstances beyond the staff member's control.

5.3 A staff member who has served a minimum of six months may, in exceptional circumstances, be granted advance annual leave up to a maximum of 10 working days, provided his or her service is expected to continue for a period beyond that necessary to accrue the leave so advanced. If, upon separation, the annual leave credit actually earned and accrued was less than the advance, the staff member shall

[3] ST/AI/2000/20.
[4] ST/AI/1999/15.

be required to make restitution by means of a cash refund. The restitution requirement may be waived if the Secretary-General is satisfied that there are compelling reasons for doing so.

5.4 Subject to the exigencies of service, leave must be taken within the period of the contract. However, if a contract is extended at the same mission or if the staff member is reassigned to another mission or if the staff member receives an LD appointment within one month after the expiration of the previous one, accrued leave may be carried over into the next contractual period. A maximum of 30 days of accrued leave may be carried forward beyond 1 January of any year or may be commuted into cash upon separation.

5.5 Special leave may be granted to staff members under staff rule 305.2, in the following circumstances:

(a) In connection with the birth of a child, the mother may be granted special leave for a maximum of 16 weeks with full pay, upon production of a certificate from a qualified medical practitioner indicating the anticipated date of birth. Payment of a mission subsistence allowance (MSA) shall be subject to the provisions of the administrative instruction on MSA;[5]

(b) If the father of the child is married to a staff member to whom special leave is granted under the above subsection or to whom maternity leave is granted under the 100 or 200 series of the Staff Rules, the portion of the special or maternity leave unused by the mother may be taken by the father as paternity leave, after the birth of the child;

(c) In the case of the adoption of a child, special leave with pay may be granted to either adoptive parent for a maximum of eight weeks under the terms and conditions governing adoption leave, contained in section 4 of the administrative instruction on family leave, sick leave and maternity leave;[6]

(d) In other compelling circumstances, as may be determined by the Secretary-General.

Section 6
Sick leave

6.1 Sick leave shall be subject to the conditions set out in staff rule 306.2 and the provisions of the present section.

6.2 Credits towards sick leave accrue at the rate of two working days for each month of continuous service. Upon appointment, staff members will be credited with the full amount of sick leave that will accrue during the whole period of the appointment. Should separation occur before the expiration date of the appointment, sick leave credits will be recalculated on the basis of the actual period of service.

6.3 There shall be no cash payment for unused sick leave credits. If an LD appointment is extended or if the staff member is reassigned from one mission to another or if the staff member receives an LD appointment within one month after the expiration of the previous one, unused sick leave credits may be carried forward into the new contractual period.

[5] ST/AI/1997/6.
[6] ST/AI/1999/12.

6.4 All sick leave must be approved on behalf of the Secretary-General. Any absence of more than two consecutive working days must be supported by a medical certificate from a duly qualified medical practitioner. Uncertified sick leave may not exceed three working days within any period of six months of continuous service.

6.5 A staff member may use up to three days of uncertified sick leave within any period of six months of continuous service as family leave, in order to attend to family-related emergencies, subject to authorization by the Chief of Administration at the mission. In such cases, the requirement of a medical certificate after two consecutive days of sick leave shall not apply.

Section 7
Social security

Pension

7.1 Staff members who meet the requirements of article 21 of the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (i.e., upon confirmation of an appointment for six months or longer or upon completion of six months of service without an interruption of more than 30 days) and who have met the standard United Nations medical requirements shall be enrolled as participants in the Fund, unless a specific exclusion is included in the letter of appointment. The rates of pensionable remuneration for staff in the Professional and Field Service categories are set out in appendix C to the 300 series of the Staff Rules. For General Service staff, the pensionable remuneration is determined in accordance with the methodology approved by the General Assembly in resolution 48/225.

Medical insurance

7.2 Medical insurance, valid for the country of assignment, is a prerequisite for employment under an LD appointment. Staff members appointed for a period of three months or longer may enrol themselves and their eligible family members within 31 days of their initial qualifying appointment. Enrolment of family members may also be made within 31 days of marriage or the birth or legal adoption of a child. Enrolment at any other time must be made at the time of the annual enrolment opportunity. For LD staff applying for coverage under the Van Breda plan, the annual enrolment opportunity shall be on the anniversary of their entry on duty; for other plans, staff members may apply during the annual enrolment campaign.

7.3 Enrolment in a United Nations contributory health insurance plan by a staff member under an LD appointment shall not be counted for the purpose of determining eligibility for coverage under the United Nations after-service health insurance programme.[7] However, a staff member who has been enrolled in a United Nations contributory health insurance plan for at least 10 years and receives an LD appointment without any break in service may receive after-service health insurance benefits on separation, provided all the eligibility criteria for enrolment in the after-service health insurance programme are met.

7.4 Candidates requesting exemption from participation in a medical insurance scheme provided by the United Nations shall be required to produce evidence that they have secured for themselves coverage generally equivalent to United Nations

[7] The terms and conditions of after-service health insurance are defined in ST/AI/394.

coverage. When granted, such exemption will be included in the letter of appointment. Staff members who are exempted from United Nations coverage will be required to maintain their own coverage for the duration of the assignment or, if it lapses, to join a United Nations scheme in accordance with section 7.2 above.

War risk, life insurance and compensation for service-incurred injury, illness or death

7.5 Staff members on LD appointments will be covered by United Nations war risk insurance, where applicable, but are responsible for making their own arrangements for life insurance. They are eligible to participate in the United Nations life insurance scheme, provided they have an appointment of six months or longer and meet the other qualifying conditions set out in the administrative instruction on life insurance.[8] Staff members shall be entitled to compensation for service-incurred injury, illness or death. In each case, the Secretary-General may decide whether to apply the provisions of appendix D to the Staff Rules or to offer comparable compensation.

Death benefit

7.6 Under staff rule 309.6, where a staff member dies in the course of service, a lump sum of three months gross salary, less staff assessment, excluding MSA or other allowances, shall be paid to the surviving spouse and/or dependent children, to be divided equally among these beneficiaries.

Compensation for loss of, or damage to, personal effects

7.7 Staff members shall be entitled to compensation, within the limits and under the conditions established by the Secretary-General,[9] in the event of loss or damage to their personal effects determined to be directly attributable to the performance of official duties on behalf of the United Nations.

Section 8
Status, obligations and privileges

8.1 Individuals holding LD appointments have the status of staff members of the United Nations and will be entitled to the privileges and immunities accorded to that status. If required to travel, they may be issued a United Nations *laissez-passer*.

8.2 As international civil servants, they are bound by the duties and obligations set out in article I of the Staff Regulations and staff rules 301.2 and 301.3 and should observe the standards of conduct expected of international civil servants,[10] including the obligation to discharge their functions and to regulate their conduct with the interests of the United Nations only in view, the obligation to observe strict neutrality, and the obligation not to seek or receive instructions from any source external to the United Nations.

[8] ST/AI/2000/18.
[9] ST/AI/149/Rev.4.
[10] See ST/SGB/1998/19, Status, Basic Rights and Duties of United Nations Staff Members, annex V.

Section 9
Termination

9.1 An LD appointment may be terminated at any time under staff rule 309.2 if, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, such action would be in the interest of the United Nations.

9.2 In accordance with staff rule 309.3, locally recruited staff members will be given not less than one week's written notice of termination. Non-locally recruited staff members will be given not less than two weeks' written notice. The Secretary-General may authorize pay in lieu of these notice periods.

9.3 In accordance with staff rule 309.4, no termination indemnity is payable to staff on LD appointments unless such payment is specified in the letter of appointment.

Section 10
Final provisions

10.1 The present instruction shall enter into force on 1 April 2001.

10.2 Administrative instruction ST/AI/395 of 2 June 1994 is hereby abolished.

(*Signed*) Joseph E. **Connor**
Under-Secretary-General for Management